

Notes
KICKAPOO RESERVE MANAGEMENT BOARD
KICKAPOO VALLEY RESERVE VISITOR CENTER
June 18, 2020

6:30 PM Meeting called to order by Executive Director Marcy West.

- Board members in attendance: AJ Mann, Travis Downing, Reggie Nelson, Susan Cushing, Tina Brown, Paul Hayes, Dave Maxwell, Julie Hoel, Dick Wallin. Board members absent: Bill Quackenbush. Staff present: Marcy West, Jason Leis, Jonel Kiesau, Ben Johnston, Jackie Yocum, Erica Cronk.

Annual Field Trip: All items for information and discussion only. No action items. Practicing COVID-19 precautions, anyone not in the same household drove separately and met at Bridge 10 area off County Highway P-East.

- Visit floodplain forest area along County Hwy P-East on the north side of P, near intersection of Hwy 131 and P-East – Hayes led discussion on floodplain forest. Relatively rare in Driftless region; besides Mississippi River area it is only known location in Vernon County. Counting on silver maple to take over and complete canopy cover with water standing at least through mid-summer. Spring ephemerals very important part of this ecosystem. Contiguous, closed canopy is the goal and crucial for forest birds (ex. Pileated Woodpecker). Long term target is lower wetland forest with contiguous canopy thinking of big picture and ratio from edge to interior. Floodplain forests help with flood resiliency.
- Turn around and short walk to Bridge 10. West shared the importance of this area with floodplain forest on one side and archeological site on other. Bridge 10 with curved, decorative design (one of the first in the State). Gaps on bridge designed intentionally to support nesting Swallows. In 2018 flood, huge sections of Highway 131 were damaged, but bridge survived well.
- Walk across Hwy 131 along 9/10 Trail to new campsite S – Leis update: Old campsite S moved due to floodplain ordinance requirements. New site S out of floodplain with river access close by. Small oak trees intentionally left in new site to allow growth. Waiting for grass seed to become better established. Evacuation route still needs put in place. Site set to open June 26th. View river access route for site S, then continue hiking 9/10 Trail to new campsite W.
- Hiking along 9/10 Trail - Johnston pointed out invasive Japanese Hedge Parsley. It spreads rapidly and out competes other plants. Controlled by pulling if no seeds are present and removing from area. Johnston also discussed Tansy another invasive that is aggressive and can take over easily.
- Continue along 9/10 Trail to north end near intersection with Highway 131. View the agricultural field Leis shared was taken out of production due to asbestos contamination.
- Discussion on Education related items and Dam Challenge race. Kiesau update: All summer camps were cancelled last week based on guidelines from CDC, DHS and Vernon Memorial Healthcare. Several camp families donated their camp registration back to KVR. La Farge Schools partnered with the Kickapoo Valley Reserve received a DPI grant to begin a Forest School. The five-year, \$700,000.00 grant administered by La Farge schools, will begin enrolling students in the fall of 2021 starting with 4K/5K. Forest School Planning Committee searching for individual with legal background to serve on Governance Board. Dam Challenge update: registration typically opens July 1st. Survey was sent to racers and volunteers regarding race preference for 2020 due to COVID-19 concerns. Majority of racers

responded they would like race to go on. West: need to consider sponsorships and local businesses already impacted by COVID-19.

- Final stop along Highway 131 near Bridge 9 to view future floodplain forest. On west side of highway, area currently dominated by box elders, eventually would like to see the canopy close surrounded on three sides by hardwoods. In 50 years, the canopy will naturally begin to fill in.
- Meeting adjourned.

Next KRMB Meeting July 16, 2020 - Meeting adjourned 8:10pm.

Recorded by:
Erica A Cronk